

Scaffolding Reading Comprehension:

Preparing for Passage Reading



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Before Reading Practices

- Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.
- Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.
- Teach or activate any necessary background knowledge.
- Preview the story or article.



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

BIG IDEA: If students can read the words in a passage accurately and fluently, their reading comprehension will be enhanced.



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

Why

- Word recognition and decoding skills are necessary, though not sufficient for reading comprehension.
- Systematic and explicit decoding instruction improves students' word recognition, spelling, and reading comprehension. (National Reading Panel, 2000)
- Fluent reading in the primary grades is related to reading comprehension.
 - Variance in reading comprehension explained by oral reading fluency: 1st (61%), 2nd (61%), 3rd (50%) (Torgeson, 2007)



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

Selection of words for decoding instruction.

Selection of words

1. Use the list of difficult to read words provided in your program.
2. If list of words is not provided or inadequate for your students, preview the passage selecting the difficult to read words.
3. Divide the difficult to pronounce words into two categories for instructional purposes:
 - Tell Words** (irregular words, words containing untaught elements, and foreign words)
 - Strategy Words** (words that can be decoded when minimal assistance is provided)



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

(Tell students the pronunciation of irregular words and words containing unknown elements.)

Tell Words

group

area

science

scientist

learn

learned



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words. (Guide students in using their decoding strategies.)

Strategy Words

crane

cranes

sandhill cranes

whooping cranes

tape

migrate

hope

follow

following

fly

flying

train

trained

survive

travel

airplane

Wisconsin

Florida

trust

noise



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

Teaching the pronunciation of words.

Tell Words

This word is _____.

What word? _____

Spell and read the word.

there along upon woman



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

Teaching the pronunciation of words.

Strategy Words - Single syllable words

Precorrect the difficult part of the word.

Look at the underlined letters.

What sound? _____

Sound out the word. Put your thumb up when you know the word. (Pause)

What word? _____

rain

boat

seed



Teach the pronunciation of difficult to read words.

Teaching the pronunciation of words.

Strategy Words - Multisyllabic

- Segment the word into decodable parts. Indicate parts with loops under the word.
- Guide students in reading each part of the word.
(Move your finger under each part of the word.)

What part? _____

What part? _____

What part? _____

What word? _____

condensation

evaporation

wonderful

Note: If any element is unknown, simply tell students the pronunciation of the element.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.

BIG IDEA: If students understand the meaning of critical vocabulary in the passage, their comprehension will be enhanced.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Why

- Vocabulary is related to reading comprehension.
 - “Indeed, one of the most enduring findings in reading research is the extent to which students’ vocabulary knowledge relates to their reading comprehension.” (Osborn & Hiebert, 2004)
 - Variance in reading explained by vocabulary:
1st (20%), 2nd (31%), 3rd (36%) (Torgeson, 2007)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Why

- **Children's vocabulary in the early grades is related to reading comprehension in the upper grades.**
 - **Preschool** - Children's vocabulary correlated with reading comprehension in upper elementary school.
(Dickinson & Tabois, 2001)
 - **Kindergarten** - Vocabulary size was an effective predictor of reading comprehension in middle elementary years. (Scarborough, 1998)
 - **First Grade** - Orally tested vocabulary was a significant predictor of reading comprehension ten years later.
(Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997)
 - **Third Grade** - Children with restricted vocabulary have declining comprehension scores in the later elementary years. (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Why - Vocabulary Gap

- Linguistically “poor” first graders knew 5,000 words; linguistically “rich” first graders knew 20,000 words. (Moats, 2001)
- Children who enter school with limited vocabulary knowledge grow more discrepant over time from their peers who have rich vocabulary knowledge. (Baker, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 1997)
- Gap in word knowledge persists though the elementary years. (White, Graves, & Slater, 1990)
- The vocabulary gap between struggling readers and proficient readers grows each year. (Stanovich, 1986)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. How

“Until schools are prepared to emphasize vocabulary acquisition, especially in the primary grades, less advantaged children will continue to be handicapped even if they master reading written words.” (Biemiller & Boote, 2006)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.

How - Robust, Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

- **Attributes of good vocabulary instruction**
 - Multiple exposures
 - Definitional information and contextual information
 - Sufficient amount of instructional time to insure understanding of words
 - Active engagement in instruction



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Selection of vocabulary

- Select a **limited number** of words for robust, explicit vocabulary instruction.
- **Three to ten words** per story or section in a chapter would be appropriate.
- Briefly **tell students the meaning of other words** that are needed for comprehension.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.

Preparation - Selection of vocabulary

- Select words that are **unknown**.
- Select words that are **critical** to passage understanding.
- Select words that students are likely to encounter in the **future** and are generally useful. (Stahl, 1986)
 - Focus on Tier Two words (Beck & McKeown, 2003)
 - Academic Vocabulary
- Select words that are more **difficult**.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown

vocabulary words. Preparation -Selection of vocabulary

- Tier One - Basic words
 - chair, bed, happy, house

- **Tier Two - Words in general use, but not common**
 - concentrate, absurd, fortunate, relieved, dignity, convenient

- Tier Three - Rare words limited to a specific domain
 - tundra, igneous rocks, weathering

(Beck & McKeown, 1985)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.

Preparation - Selection of vocabulary

- “Goldilocks Words”
 - Not too difficult
 - Not too easy
 - Just right

(Stahl & Stahl, 2004)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Select 3 words for robust explicit instruction.

| | | |
|---|----------|--------------|
| Reading Level: 2nd Passage: Lemonade for Sale Series: Harcourt Trophies | | |
| announced | members | neighborhood |
| arrived | rebuild | lemonade |
| glum | squawked | clubhouse |



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Select 5 words for robust explicit instruction.

cranes

whooping cranes

sandhill cranes

airplane

travel

migrate

scientist

flying

survive

learned

thought

followed

trained

young



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Selection of words.

Also, teach idioms *(A phrase or expression in which the entire meaning is different from the usual meaning of the individual words.)*

“The car rolling down the hill caught my eye.”

“Soon we were in stitches.”

“The painting cost me an arm and a leg.”

“The teacher was under the weather.”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Student-friendly explanations.

- **Dictionary Definition**

- **relieved** - (1) To free wholly or partly from pain, stress, pressure.
(2) To lessen or alleviate, as pain or pressure

- **Student-Friendly Explanation** (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2003)

- **Uses known words.**
- **Is easy to understand.**
- When something that was difficult is over or never happened at all, you feel **relieved**.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Student-friendly explanation.

- **Dictionary Definition**

- **Attention** - a. the act or state of attending through applying the mind to an object of sense or thought
b. a condition of readiness for such attention involving a selective narrowing of consciousness and receptivity

- **Explanation from Dictionary for English Language Learners**

(*Elementary Learner's Dictionary* published by Oxford)

- **Attention** - looking or listening carefully and with interest

(Go to www.longman.com and look for the on-line dictionary in the menu.)



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Preparation - Student-friendly explanation.

| Word | Definition | Student-Friendly Explanation |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| train trained | Teach a particular skill or type of behavior through practice and instruction over a period of time. | When you teach an animal to do something, you train the animal. |
| follow followed | Go or come after a person or thing proceeding ahead. | If you are in line and you walk right after the person in front of you, you follow them. |
| travel traveled | Make a journey typically of some length or abroad. | When a person or an animal goes from one place to another, they travel . When you travel, you usually go a long way. |
| migrate migrated | Move from one region or habitat to another especially regularly according to the seasons. | When birds or other animals move from one place to another at a certain time each year, they migrate . |
| survive survived | Continue to live or exist, especially in spite of danger or hardship. | When people or animals don't die when things are very bad or very dangerous, they survive . |



Video - Vocabulary Instruction

- What instructional steps were used to introduce each of the words?



Video - Vocabulary Instruction

- What other good practices did you observe?



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine

(Note: Teach words **AFTER** you have read a story to your students and **BEFORE** students read a selection.)

Step 1. Introduce the word.

- a) Write the word on the board or overhead.
- b) Read the word and have the students repeat the word.
If the word is difficult to pronounce or unfamiliar have the students repeat the word a number of times.

Introduce the word with me.

“ This word is relieved. What word?”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

Step 2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

- a) Tell students the explanation. OR
- b) Have them read the explanation with you.

Present the definition with me.

“When something that is difficult is over or never happened at all, you feel relieved. So if something that is difficult is over, you would feel _____.”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

Step 3. Illustrate the word with examples.

- a) Concrete examples.
- b) Visual representations.
- c) Verbal examples.

Present the examples with me.

“When the spelling test is over, you feel relieved.”

“When you have finished giving the speech that you dreaded, you feel relieved.”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4.** Check students' understanding.
Option #1. Ask deep processing questions.

Check students' understanding with me.

When the students lined up for morning recess, Jason said, "I am so relieved that this morning is over." Why might Jason be relieved?

When Maria was told that the soccer game had been cancelled, she said, "I am relieved." Why might Maria be relieved?



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4.** Check students' understanding.
- Option #2.** Have students discern between examples and non-examples.

Check students' understanding with me.

“If you were nervous singing in front of others, would you feel relieved when the concert was over?”

Yes ***“Why?”***

“If you loved singing to audiences, would you feel relieved when the concert was over?” No ***“Why not?”*** It was not difficult for you.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

Step 4. Check students' understanding.

Option #3. Have students generate their own examples.

Check students' understanding with me.

“Tell your partner a time when you were relieved.”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Instructional Routine (continued)

- Step 4.** Check students' understanding.
- Option #4.** Provide students with a “sentence starter”. Have them say the complete sentence.

Check students' understanding with me.

Sometimes your mother is relieved. Tell your partner when your mother is relieved. Start your sentence by saying, “My mother is relieved when_____.”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words.

Did the teacher:

1. Introduce the word?
2. Present a student-friendly explanation?
3. Illustrate the word with examples?
4. Check students' understanding?



Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example A)

1. Introduce the word.

*This word is **travel**. What word? _____*

2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

*When a person or an animal goes from one place to another, they **travel**. So when a person or an animal goes from one place to another place they _____. The word travel is usually used when the person or animal goes a long way. So would we use the travel if we were talking about going from this room to the next room? _____*



Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example A)

continued)

3. Illustrate the word with examples.

If you went from Portland to Nashville on an airplane, you would _____.

If you drove from Boston to Nashville in a car, you would _____.

4. Check students' understanding.

(Deep processing question.)

Why might a family travel to another city? Tell your partner. (The teacher calls on individuals.)

(Generate examples.)

Tell your partner some place that you and your family have traveled to.

(Teacher monitors and then calls on individuals.)



Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example B)

1. Introduce the word.

*This word is **migrate**. What word?*

2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

*When birds or other animals move from one place to another at a certain time each year, they **migrate**. So if birds move to a new place in the winter or spring, we say that the birds _____. Animals usually migrate to find a warmer place to live or to get food.*

3. Illustrate the word with examples.

Sandhill Cranes fly from the North to the South so they can live in a warmer place. Sandhill Cranes _____.



Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example B continued)

The wildebeests in Africa move to a new place so that they can find water and grass. Wildebeests _____.



4. Check students' understanding. (Deep processing question.)

Why might birds migrate? Tell your partner.
(The teacher monitors and coaches. Then the teacher calls on individuals.)

Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example C)

1. Introduce the word.

*This word is **survive**. What word?*

2. Present a student-friendly explanation.

*When people or animals don't die when things are very bad or dangerous, they **survive**.*

3. Illustrate the word with examples.

Look at the people on this river. It is very dangerous. However, they don't get hurt or die, they _____.





Practice Activity: Teaching Critical Vocabulary (Example C continued)

4. Check students' understanding.

(Examples and non-examples)

Get ready to tell me if this group would survive.

If the winter was very cold and all food was buried under the snow, would whooping cranes survive? _____ Ones, tell your partner why they wouldn't survive?

If whooping cranes had plenty of food and the weather was warm, would they survive? _____ Twos, tell your partner why they would survive?

(Deep Processing Questions)

If a rabbit was being chased by a coyote, what could the rabbit do to survive?



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Review

After teaching the group of vocabulary words, review the words using a “word association” activity.

Words written on board or overhead:

enemy, disgusting, invited, relieved

“Tell me the word that I am thinking of....

Someone that hates you might be called an _____.

If you didn’t like a food, you might say it is _____.

When a test is over, you often feel _____.

When you are asked to a party, you are _____. ”



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Review

After teaching the group of vocabulary words, review the words using a “choice” activity.

Words written on board or overhead:

enemy, disgusting, invited, relieved

- *If you felt **relieved** after a test, was the test probably easy or difficult?*
- *If an **enemy** gave you the answers before a test, would you believe the answers to be correct or incorrect?*
- *If the food was **disgusting**, would you ask for more or spit it up?*
- *If you were **invited** to a party, would you be asked to come or to stay away?*



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words. Word Walls

- Create a word wall in your classroom.
 - Post a reminder of the context.
 - Copy of the cover of the read-aloud book
 - Copy of the first page in the story
 - The topic in science or social studies
 - Post the vocabulary words.
 - Incorporate the words into your classroom language.
 - Encourage students to use the words when speaking and writing.



Teach the meaning of critical, unknown

vocabulary words. Vocabulary Logs

- Have students maintain a log of vocabulary to facilitate study and review.
- What can be recorded on a vocabulary log?
 - Word
 - Student-friendly explanation
 - Any of these options
 - A sentence to illustrate the word's meaning
 - Examples and non-examples
 - An illustration
- In lower grades, create a group log on a flip chart.



Teach or activate necessary background knowledge.

Big Idea: If students have the background knowledge required by a passage, their comprehension will be enhanced.



Teach or activate necessary background knowledge. *Why*

- Background knowledge is related to comprehension.
- Students from low-income homes may have fewer life experiences and literacy-promoting activities resulting in less background knowledge and fewer *schemas* for supporting comprehension.



Teach or activate necessary background knowledge.

How

Teach the background knowledge that is required for passage comprehension.

Strategy #1

- Introduce background knowledge as outlined in your reading program. Actively engage the students.

Strategy #2

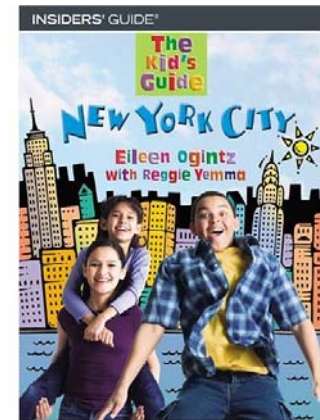
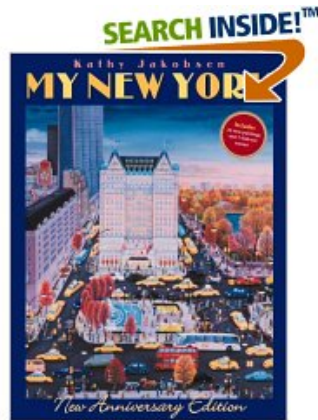
- “Front load” passage reading by teaching additional background knowledge needed to better understand the passage.

Strategy #3

- Prior to passage reading, select and read aloud a book that provides necessary background knowledge.

Teach or activate necessary background knowledge.

How



Strategy #3 Example

- Prior to passage reading, select and read aloud a book that provides necessary background knowledge.
 - **Passage:** *Me and Uncle Romie*
 - **Background Knowledge Needed:** Life in a big city (New York City)



Teach or activate necessary background knowledge.

How

Strategy #1

- Ask students questions and engage them in a discussion to activate their background knowledge.

Strategy #2

- Activate prior knowledge using KWL strategy.
- To increase student success, “front load” before having students respond to KWL chart. If this is done, students will “know” something and will have a basis for formulating questions about they want to find out.

Strategy #3

- Brainstorm the topics/questions that might be covered. This will strengthen or activate schema.



Teach or activate necessary background knowledge.

How (Olson & Gee, 1991)

| K What I know | W What want to find out | L What I learned |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| | | |



Preview the story or article.

Big Idea: If students preview a passage, their comprehension will be enhanced.



Preview the story or article. Why

- As students preview a selection, they:
 - discover what content will be covered or what the story will be about.
 - learn what information will be emphasized.
 - see how the information is organized.
 - activate background knowledge that will assist in comprehension.
 - become more interested in the passage.



Preview the story or article. How

Narrative Passages.

- Read the title. Predict the content of the story.
- Preview the illustrations/pictures. Predict the content of the passage.

Expository/informational/factual passages

- Read the title. Predict the content of the passage.
- Read the introduction. Ask, “What will we learn in this passage.”
- Read the headings and subheadings. Predict the passage’s content from the headings and subheadings.
- Read the summary and questions.



Preview the story or article. Strategy

Warm-Up

Before you read a chapter or a section of a chapter in your science, social studies, or health book, Warm-up. Get an idea of the chapter's content by previewing these parts.

BEGINNING

- **Title**
- **Introduction**

MIDDLE

- **Headings**
- **Subheadings**

END

- **Summary**
- **Questions**